



# MONTEREY NEWS

FEBRUARY 1996  
VOLUME XXVI • Number 2



## THE TOWN

**Taking 1996 by Storm.** On Monday, January 8, a formal state of emergency was declared by the Select Board in response to the storm which swaddled the town in three feet of snow. These were no sentimental flurries but substantial flakes with a discernible attitude. The storm, however, had far less impact on our small town than on those two major cities which lie to the south and east. Well prepared with skills and equipment, town crews reduced emergency to mere inconvenience, thanks to the behind-the-scenes competence of Emergency Management Director Ray Tryon, who supervised public road openings and snow removal, assuring the protection to person and property we take for granted. The central mechanism of Emergency Management is not a recent development, but it was brought to the forefront in 1994 during the process of securing 911 services, which requires that lines of communication be unmistakably defined. 1995 twice tested that mechanism—in the February snow storm and after the May tornado; in this early test for 1996, Monterey was not found wanting.

**Miller Coordinating Report.** Michèle Miller is Needs Assessment Coordinator regarding the bequest of property, including two houses, to the town by Edith Wilson and Margery McLaughlin. Michèle defines her role as “a bridge between the Select Board, the



ELEANOR KIMBERLEY

*In snow tunnels at Bob Kimberley's place are Dan and Kristy Kimberley, Ashley Battaini, and Matthew Somes, left to right.*

Arts Council, and the estate. The implications of the bequest could entail a large responsibility for the Arts Council. I'm interested in listening to everyone.” Monterey architectural designer Chris Blair is helping estimate the cost of converting the residence to municipal use. “With a little vision and a little patience, the town would have something to be quite proud of,” said Stefan Grotz, Chair of the Select Board.

**A Matter of Remuneration.** A Salary Committee recently appointed by the Select Board has begun meeting under the chairmanship of Jim Bracken. It will research and evaluate salaries for employees of the Town, then make recommendations. “We’ve just started with the research,” said Jane Kessler, who serves on the committee along with Walter Parks and Barbara Tryon. “Jim brings valuable experience to the issues to be addressed, and knows some of the

## NOTICE

The Town of Monterey will conduct a public hearing at 9 a.m. on Saturday, February 10, in the Monterey firehouse on Main Road to determine whether or not the Town should assign to the Monterey Preservation Land Trust its right of first refusal to purchase the Gay Noe McLendon property on Tyringham and Mount Hunger Roads.

Stefan Grotz, Chair  
Georgiana O’Connell  
Peter S. Brown  
Monterey Select Board



pitfalls." Mr. Bracken has experience in human resources with Kolburne School in New Marlborough.

**A Question of Options.** Assignment of the Town's right of first refusal on the McLendon property to the Monterey Preservation Land Trust will be the subject of a public hearing set for 9 a.m. on January 10 at the Monterey Firehouse. Peter Vallianos, whose recommendations the Board followed in setting the hearing, says that the Land Trust has already received pledges from a large number of its members for well over half the purchase price. Select Board member Gige O'Connell emphasized that the Town is not buying the property, but wishes to hear the will of the townspeople as to whether it should assign the option to another entity committed to its conservation. "There has been a tremendous amount of discussion about this already," said O'Connell. The Select Board has stated that if "the Land Trust is able to raise the necessary funds, this beautiful 300-acre parcel of rural upland

woods would thus be preserved for the enjoyment of future generations of Monterey citizens."

**VNA Agreement Renewed.** By unanimous vote of the Board of Health, Monterey has again contracted for provision of Community Health Services with the Berkshire Visiting Nurse Association of Pittsfield. The contract is effective for the period July 1, 1996, to June 30, 1997, at an assessment of \$1,425.



**SBRSD Report.** Jed Lipsky, Monterey's representative on the Southern Berkshire Regional School District Committee, talked with the Select Board about chal-

lenges currently before the Committee. Polar positions on how to protect the balance of power among constituent towns has stalled compliance with the one person/one vote mandate from the state, under which Monterey stands to gain representation. "Many of the conflicts we face don't have a solution in a single action; they are deeply rooted in the sociology of our communities," said Lipsky. After several years of intense budget struggles, current representatives are focused on an earlier collaboration between Town fiscal bodies and the district administration. "The days of presenting numbers before the Towns for automatic approval at the Town Meetings are over," said Select Board member Peter Brown.

— Donna Burkhardt

## MONTEREY LIBRARY WINTER FILM SERIES

The Monterey Library will show the last two films in its annual Saturday family film series on February 3 and 10. Movies (suitable for all ages) are in 16mm format, and begin at 7:30 p.m. in the basement of the Monterey Library. Admission is free, popcorn and apple juice are available at nominal cost.

On February 3 the movie will be *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pitman* (1974), with Cicely Tyson; and on February 10 *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (1967) will be shown, with Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, and Sidney Poitier.

For further information, please call the library at 528-3795.

## DAFFODIL DAYS COMING

The American Cancer Society again offers cut daffodils, all tightly budded and ready to burst into bloom to cheer you through mud season. Ten blooms are \$5. Callers will take your orders between now and March 8. If you are (unintentionally) missed, call Maryellen Brown at 528-1598, or Fran Amidon, 528-1233.

Please prepay to help our bookkeeping, and so we don't impose collection on Gale and Maynard at the General Store. Cash, or checks made out to the American Cancer Society.

And remember to pick them up (somebody always forgets) on March 20 at the General Store!

— Fran Amidon

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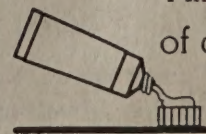
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## TAXES AND CONSERVATION: THE NUMBERS

Property values in Monterey, as in other Massachusetts towns, are calculated by the application of town-wide assessment formulae based on arm's-length sales of all types of property and land in town during recent years.

Total valuation of the town (the tax base) is the sum of the assessed value of all properties. This figure is a factor in setting the tax rate for the fiscal year. The other factor is the amount of money appropriated (spent) by voters in the Annual Town Meeting. Every year the state provides some funding for all municipalities; the balance of what is spent at Town Meeting is raised by taxation. After Town Meeting, the assessors consider all sources of funds, and calculate the tax rate; the amount to be raised divided by the total valuation equals the tax on every dollar of valuation. The tax rate is commonly expressed as a number of dollars per thousand dollars of valuation.

In the current fiscal year (FY 1996: the period from July 1, 1995, through June 30, 1996) the total valuation of Monterey properties as of the record date (January 1, 1995) was about \$165 million. At Town Meeting last May, voters appropriated about \$1.8 million in expenditures; other sources of revenue left \$1.35 million to be raised through taxation. The tax rate was set at \$8.26 per thousand.

Playing with these numbers can yield interesting and useful information. For example, a dollar on the tax rate generates \$165,000 in tax revenue for the town this fiscal year. Viewed another way, we can say that had Town Meeting spent \$165,000 less last May, the tax rate would have been a dollar less (\$7.26 per thou-

sand). Each taxpayer can calculate how much various town expenditures cost him. For example, the \$20,000 voted for Town Hall improvements cost Monterey taxpayers 12¢ on the tax rate. An individual would pay 12¢ times the number of thousands of dollars of his total property valuation. Say a taxpayer owns Monterey property valued at \$100,000; Town Hall improvements cost him \$12 this year. The per-taxpayer cost of most warrant articles is surprisingly low, simply because the tax base over which all expenses are evenly divided is relatively large.

Bring this sort of calculation into the context of current affairs: the proposal to develop and the option of conserving the McLendon property on Tyringham and Mount Hunger Roads raises the question, How much does conservation land cost taxpayers?

These 300+ undeveloped acres of woods are assessed at approximately \$500,000. At that value, it would generate \$4,130 in tax revenue this fiscal year. It would take 2 1/2¢ on the tax rate in the current year to raise \$4,130. For our sample taxpayer whose total valuation is \$100,000, the additional annual cost of removing the property and its valuation

from the tax base would be \$2.50. Two and a half bucks a year. With the revenue cost of conserved land spread among us all, the individual cost is small.

As a matter of fact, the McLendon property is currently classified as forest land under the provisions of Chapter 61, and is taxed at 5% of its valuation under Chapter 59, the general property tax statute. Instead of \$4,130 annual revenue to the Town, taxes have been about \$200 for each of the last three years. The basic

purpose of Chapter 61 is to give tax relief to property owners who make a commitment to manage their land as forest over the long term, not just for a few years. MPLT policy would be to continue the practice of sensible forestry forever.

It's not possible or desirable to conserve all the remaining undeveloped land in town. But the natural character of Monterey—the trees, meadows, and hills—is easy to take for granted. That's what draws many of us here, inspires and invigorates us day after day. Selective conservation can give some assurance of the permanence of that character. At \$2.50 a year, it's cheap at twice the price.

— Peter S. Vallianos



## Monterey's First Annual Skating Celebration

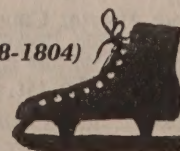


**Saturday, February 17**  
**noon to 5:00pm**

**at the Monterey Rink behind the firehouse on Rte 23**

Rink Dedication to include relay races, figure skating,  
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## NEW MARLBOROUGH AND MONTEREY SCHOOL NEWS

I would like to continue introducing you to the support staff at the New Marlborough Central School and Monterey School.

Julie Kelley is teacher's aid at the Monterey K/1. She has held that position for three years. Her daily duties consist of attendance, lunch count and related bookkeeping chores, setting up materials for classroom work or projects, and recess duty. In the afternoons she and classroom teacher Susan Andersen split the class into two groups and work on individual projects.

When Julie came to this job three years ago, she came to a half-day kindergarten class. Now there is all-day kindergarten available, and the class is a combined kindergarten and first grade. The transition has had its challenges, but Julie reports that everything is running smoothly now.

I asked Julie for her thoughts on what it is like to work in a one-room schoolhouse: "I love it! It's an experience for children everyone should try to match." She also believes it to be a wonderful opportunity for children to be introduced to the school environment without being overwhelmed by it. Best part of the job? Seeing the children come in "green" and watching as it all starts to fall into place.

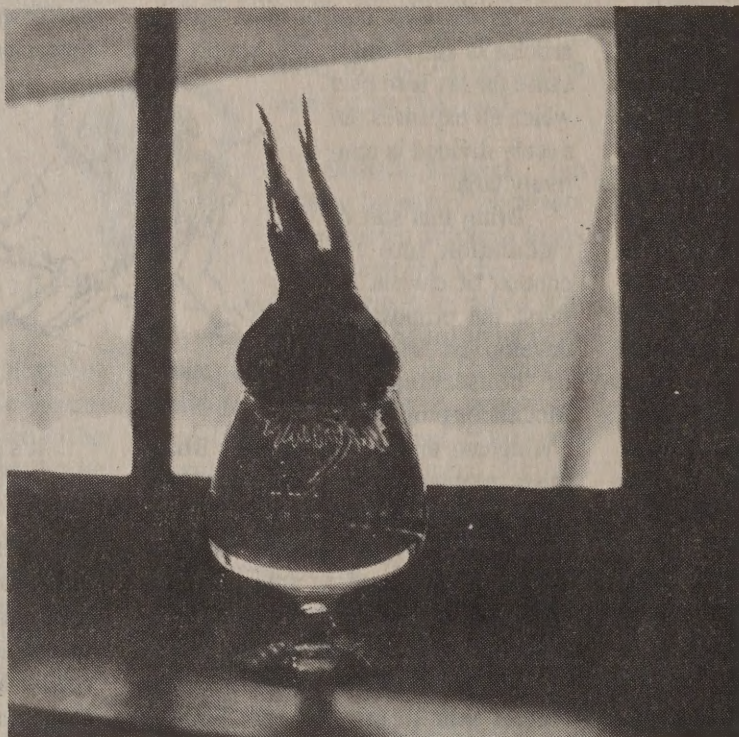
As well as her job as teacher's aide, Julie volunteers as co-coach for pre-little leaguers and is president of the PTA. Thanks for your commitment of time and talent!

Monterey K/1 has finished DARE. Mom Harriet Candee is coming for a second session of clay modeling (no Play-Doh here). That is, *if* we have any school between snowstorms.

— Deborah Mielke

## MT. HUNGER FUNDS RISING

The Selectmen are holding a Public Hearing at 9 a.m. on February 10 in the firehouse to consider assignment of the right of first refusal on the McLendon property to the Monterey Land Trust. By the time of the public hearing, we should have pledges of funds nearly equal to the



P. MURKETT

price of the property. Should the Select Board vote to assign the Town's option to the MPLT, we will then be able to proceed in an orderly fashion to a closing before expiration of the statutory period toward the end of March.

So far pledges total about three-quar-

ters of the purchase price. Not bad. Obviously there are substantial pledges from a few concerned citizens and organizations, but the response from our members has also been terrific. There have been countless phone calls offering help and advice from as far away as Florida and California.

One member offered to match \$10,000 if we could get such a sum from two names which she gave us. Is there someone else out there willing to offer a matching grant?

I have applied to a local conservation foundation whose policy it is to preserve very large tracts of land, generally a thousand acres or more. They seem receptive to us, but have asked that we try to obtain more abutting land for conservation. We are now writing to abutters as well as others nearby, lining up several parcels to approach an eventual goal of a thousand acres. If this can be done, I think we could acquire substan-

tial funds from that source.

Please continue to contact your friends and neighbors—the fund-raising is critical now. Keep those pledges coming! Most of all, thank you one and all for your support.

— Joyce Scheffey

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## MONTEREY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

### A Covenant of Conscience

Increasingly, I find myself bombarded by media messages that reduce conversation and discussion to sound bytes. Apart from oversimplification, there is the lurking danger of misunderstanding. Depersonalizing the personal, oversimplifying the complex easily results not only in misunderstanding but also in divisiveness and factionalism. Rather than seriously dealing with issues and personalities, it is easier to resort to verbal brickbats. Apart from the media, ultimate responsibility rests with each one of us: the words we speak, the actions we perform.

It is in keeping with this philosophy that the Berkshire County Inter-Religious Council is inviting area congregations and individuals of all faiths to consider adopting and signing a written Covenant of Conscience. Originally the work of an inter-faith clergy group in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, alarmed with the deterioration of public debate, it has been adopted here with the hope and intention of maintaining an atmosphere of respect among all people. If you are interested in a copy for signing, please call Keith Snow, 528-5850. This is the text:

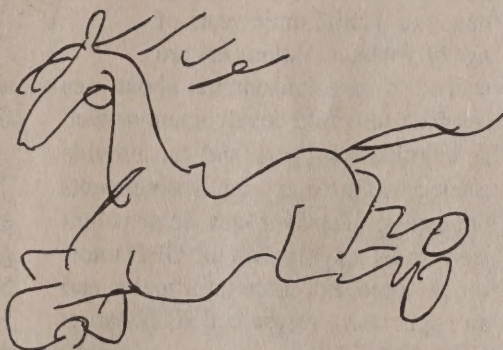
With regard to issues of import in our lives, such as race, sexuality, and the sanctity of life, and without insisting that any single point of view be absolutely correct, we join our voices to invite a climate of good will that acknowledges the differences of opinion in our community. We ask for a healthy tolerance of our diversity that will allow us to remain respectful and caring of one another even as we dialogue or differ.

Most emphatically, we would covenant with one another to defend all against degradations of hate and prejudice, especially when hate and prejudice are undertaken behind the mask of religious self-righteousness, whether Biblical or doctrinal.

Speaking with one voice and representing our differing and varied traditions of faith:

We covenant together in the name of God to support honest and fair discussion of the difficult problems besetting our society, without misinformation or distortion of fact and without bitter or violent rhetoric toward one another or toward those with whom we disagree;

Furthermore, we pledge to speak out whenever we perceive the promotion of fear, intolerance, or hatred in our community by whatever religious or secular group;



And we commit ourselves to support one another, our congregations, and others in our community whenever targeted or attacked by extremist rhetoric or actions.

On a separate note, there will be a special service of worship at 7 p.m. on Ash Wednesday, February 21, to mark the beginning of Lent. Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays (which are always little Easters, celebrations of Jesus's resurrection), which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "lencten," which means "spring." The season is a preparation for celebrating Easter. Ashes are a sign of our mortality: "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19)

Also, beginning at 7 p.m. on Monday, February 26, in the parsonage, there will be the first of six adult study/discussions on the book *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* by Marcus J. Borg. The group is open to all interested persons. A decision will be made at the first meeting to find the most agreeable time for future sessions. If you are interested and cannot attend the first session, call Keith at 528-5850.

— Keith Snow, Pastor  
Monterey United Church of Christ

## TRI-STATE JEWISH YOUTH GROUP

"Prejudice in Society and in Ourselves—Anti-Semitism and More" is the topic to be discussed at the February 11 meeting of the Tri-state Jewish Youth Group. The discussion and activity will be led by Dr. Roselle Chartock, co-editor of *Can It Happen Again: Chronicles of the Holocaust*. Dr. Chartock is an associate professor of education at North Adams State College who previously taught history at Monument Mountain Regional High School for fifteen years.

The youth group is open to all Jewish fifth through ninth graders, regardless of synagogue affiliation or Jewish educational background. There is no fee for this program, sponsored by Congregation Ahavath Sholom and Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, both of Great Barrington, and the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires.

The meeting will be held at Congregation Ahavath Sholom, North Street, Great Barrington, 12:15–2:15 p.m. Bring your own dairy or vegetarian lunch. Drinks will be provided. For additional information, please call Beth Reitman Moser at 528-4643.

### Monterey United Church of Christ

**Sunday Services • 10 a.m.**

(Child care available)

#### For assistance & information:

Keith Snow (Pastor)	528-5850
Bob Emmel (Clerk, Trustee)	528-1321
Tom O'Brien (Trustee)	269-7471
Judy Hayes (Worship)	528-1874

#### With a prayer request or to join the Prayer Chain:

MaryKate Jordan	528-5557
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## CHILDREN'S HEALTH

We need your help! Parent to Parent Volunteer Program is in need of female and male volunteers to assist area families. A volunteer training will be held at Russell House, 54 Castle Street, 4:30-6:30 p.m. on February 20 and 27, and on March 5, 12, and 19. Following the training, volunteers can be matched with families in southern Berkshire County in which there is a pregnancy or a child three years of age or younger. Volunteers are trained to give information about area services and child development as well as emotional support, and can provide transportation to important appointments or parent-child playgroups. Some volunteers assist parents with the GED tutoring program. For more information and an application, please call Claudette at CHP, 528-9311.

Here is a listing of activities for the month:

**February 5** New Parents Group, 12 noon-1 p.m. at Russell House, 54 Castle Street, Great Barrington. Dindy Anderson, director of First Steps, an early intervention program, will discuss infant development. Refreshments. For more information, please call Loren at CHP.

**February 14** Valentine Party at the Sheffield parent-child playgroup, 9:30-11:30 a.m. at the Old Parish Church, Main Street, Sheffield.

**February 17** Fathers' Group and the South Berkshire Task Force for Families and Children will sponsor a group outing to Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health, Route 183, Lenox. Berkshire County residents with identification (e.g., driver's license) will be able to use facilities and have lunch and dinner for a reduced fee of \$15 per person. Some scholarships are available. Types of activities include experimental workshops, exercise classes, yoga, meditation, whirlpools, walks, and videos. Limited childcare will be available with pre-registration. For more information and to register, please call Tony at CHP.

**February 22** Rollerskating Party co-sponsored by South Berkshire Task

Force for Families and Children and Hebert Realty, 3-5 p.m. at Searles Gym in Great Barrington. No charge for skates. For information, call Laurie Flower, 298-3178.

**February 26** Fun activities for children from birth to three years. Workshop led by Dindy Anderson, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Bear Care, South Main Street, Great Barrington. Childcare available. Co-sponsored by the Family Support Network of Children's Health Program and the South Berkshire Task Force for Families and Children. To register, please call Claudette.

There may be enough families to establish a Saturday parent-child playgroup for families with children from birth to four years. We will experiment in February and March. A parent-child playgroup will be held, 10 a.m.-12 noon on February 10 and 24, and March 2 and 9 in the playroom at Russell House, 54 Castle Street. Family Support Network staff will oversee the groups. For more information, please call Claudette. We appreciate your input.

For all participants receiving the Children's Medical Security Plan Insurance: when you are due for re-certification, you may be told to apply for Medicaid. This usually means that they have determined, based on your income, that you are eligible for this more comprehensive insurance option. If you need assistance completing the application, call Gail Bass at 528-8580.

Parents Anonymous is a local parent self-help group to assist with the important but often frustrating job of parenting. For more information, please call 1-800-882-1250.

We have two new books in our lending library: *SOS! Help for Parents*, by Lynn Clark, Ph.D. (a practical guide for handling common everyday behavior problems); and *Stepfather*, by Tony Gorman (men and women talk about problems in joining a family).

Children's Health Program is located at 54 Castle Street, Great Barrington, 528-9311.

— Claudette Callahan





## RAISING FUNDS ON THE FARM

Let me tell you about a guy in this town. Last night as Lew and I were talking—as we do a lot these days—about the Mount Hunger project, this guy inevitably came to mind—born and bred a farmer in these Berkshires hills, Yankee, political conservative, poet, reader, John Wayne fan, fiscal conservative, official on nearly every town board over the years, man of principal, man of ethic.

You may, on a summer's day, have had the opportunity to traverse Corashire Road, between Route 23 and Hartsville. If so, you will have noted about a mile of pasture, a herd of contentedly grazing cows, and some woodland to your west. That pasture, those cows (well, maybe other cows) and woods will be there in perpetuity. This is the land of Woodburn Farm, owned by Sheldon Fenn, our Man of All Years.

In 1988 Woodburn Farm was appraised at over \$820,000. It was a developer's dream, with over a mile of road frontage. During that year, Shel, whose health was not so hot, spent most of his

time and a lot of his limited funds finding out how to preserve his farm and also provide some assets for his heirs.

What Shel finally worked out under a state agricultural program was an agreement for the Commonwealth to make a bargain purchase of Woodburn's development rights for \$250,000. The only

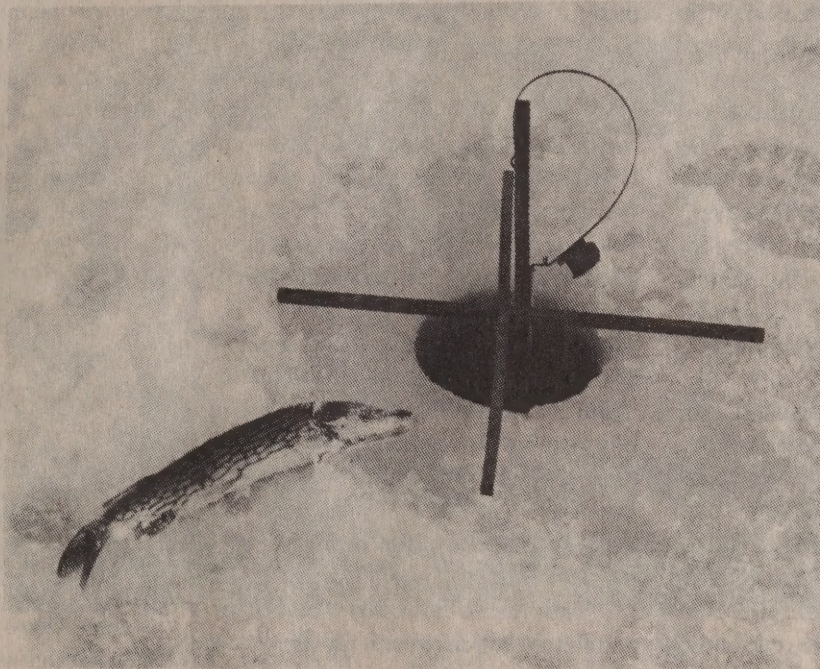
When I called Shel to ask if I could divulge how much he had pledged to the Mount Hunger effort, he said he wouldn't mind on one condition: that I put in a plug for the Monterey Preservation Land Trust, without which, he says, he would never have been able to save his farm. Needless to say, this I am happy to do.

Much of Shel's land was devastated by the tornado. He lost twenty-five or thirty acres of timber, along with the income it would have produced. Considering the hit his farm took, we would have been grateful enough to have some verbal show of support. Instead, just after we mailed our fund appeal in the middle of December, this is what Shel told us: "I should be having a little extra coming in at the beginning of the year." He added, "We lost enough

trees during that tornado...we don't need to lose any more. I'm pledging \$1,000."

Sheldon Fenn's Woodburn Farm was the first major land-conservation success for the Monterey Preservation Land Trust. We cut our teeth on it. All we needed was a guy who was willing to forego \$600,000.

—Joyce Scheffey

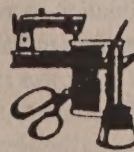


MAGGIE LEONARD

hitch was that the town had to show enough interest in the project to raise 10% of that money. Enter the MPLT. We offered to raise the \$25,000, and somehow did it—mostly with bake sales and like efforts, and a lot of help from many of Shel's friends and hundreds of others who saw the need to preserve that wonderful acreage.



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## THE POLITICIANS

*Titled and untitled correspondence from the statehouse.*

### Berkshire—or Forgotten—County?

If Governor Weld's plan for downsizing state government goes into effect as it is currently written, Berkshire County stands to become Forgotten County.

Governor Weld's reorganization plan, entitled "The Government We Choose: Lean, Focused, and Affordable," does include a few good ideas. However, his ideas of eliminating state offices in Berkshire County and thinking that a ride to Springfield is an easy trip simply goes to show a grave lack of commitment to the people of Berkshire County.

Without financial justification to back up these cutbacks, the Weld administration is looking to close our Mass Highway office in Lenox, shut down our Department of Employment and Training (DET) offices in Pittsfield and North Adams, and move our Berkshire Regional Transit Authority office currently in Pittsfield to Northampton.

Wow! Talk about cutting our services off at the knees!

As the Chairman of the Legislative Committee on State Administration, I held a hearing last week on several aspects of this proposed plan. I invited a whole slew of high-ranking officials in the Weld clan. I even invited Governor Weld himself. But they didn't come. Instead, they sent a single undersecretary of the Office of Administration and Finance who could not give me a single answer as to why the Governor is looking at short-changing the people of Berkshire County for the sake of streamlined government.

When I asked Weld's undersecretary if there had been a cost savings analysis done regarding the closing of the Mass Highway office in Lenox, she couldn't answer the question. In fact, since I knew the annual price for heat and electricity for the Lenox building ranges between \$30,000 and \$40,000, I had more facts than she did. Saving \$30,000 a year doesn't justify displacing 150 workers

and endangering the lives of all who travel on state roads and bridges.

With the closing of the DET offices in Berkshire County, Weld wants Berkshire County residents during a very fragile time in their lives to get in the car and drive to Springfield to collect unemployment benefits. Government by phone is Weld's alternative to traveling the Pike using a system currently like the one used by the Registry of Motor Vehicles.

Since everyone says that a picture is worth a thousand words, I had the hearing officer call the Registry's 800 number right then and there in front of everyone attending the hearing. The first time it was busy. The second time it was busy. The third time it was disconnected. Efficiency or uselessness?

Governor Weld does have a window of opportunity to redeem himself on this matter. When the administration revealed this plan last November, it was intended to be a philosophical document sketching a view of what Weld would like government to look like. Fortunately for us, it was not proposed legislation.

The order to Governor Weld is plain and simple: rethink your philosophy, and this time remember the taxpaying voters of Berkshire County. Berkshire County is a wonderful place to live, work, and visit. Let's not allow it to become the Forgotten County.

— State Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins

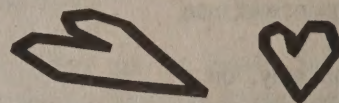
Following the recent deluge of snow that has befallen the area, I have received calls from many area communities concerned about the excessive costs involved with the removal of snow and ice. The budgets of many small towns like Monterey have already been depleted of allocated funds for snow removal. This situation jeopardizes other critical local services that are also funded by the Town. It is for this reason that I will be urging my Senate colleagues to pass a supplemental budget to provide assistance to all affected municipalities. This is of increased concern this year, as we are not yet halfway through the winter season.

I have received several petitions in response to the statewide drive that Rep-

resentative Kelly and I launched in an effort to increase funding for regional school transportation. Support for this initiative has been very positive, and I look forward to advocating for full funding in the upcoming budget deliberations. Please continue to submit your petitions if you have not already done so.

I will keep you apprised as to the progress of my efforts. As always, if I can provide you with any further information or assistance in the future, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

— State Senator Jane M. Swift



## HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS AVAILABLE

A program of the Department of Agriculture, Rural Economic and Community Development has funds for deferred-payment loans to Monterey homeowners. There is a total of \$68,000 available through Berkshire Housing Development Corporation, responsible for local administration of the program. Homeowners may use the loans for structural repairs, wiring or plumbing upgrades, energy-saving improvements, lead paint or asbestos removal, etc.

The loans provide a portion of the cost of improvements, and need be repaid only if the property is sold within seven years. To qualify, a single person must earn no more than \$22,300 per year; for a family of four, the limit is \$31,850.

For further information, call Tom Webb, program director, at 1-800-639-8505 or 413-499-1630, extension 141, or Barbara Leone, extension 140.

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## ON THE ROAD AGAIN

### Running Out Of Land

Following the road down a narrow strip of land, the sea to the right of me, the sea to the left of me, gray today because the sky is gray. We are going down the Keys. I left Alabama six days ago...a good trip. The four dogs and the cat (old timers) enjoyed the days, but the new Lhasa Apso puppy, Murphy Brown, goes from window to window of the camper, barking at the road going by. And the bird called Jock (his first trip) doesn't sing a note until we are safely settled for four days in the Keys.

We stop two times to visit—in Panama City Beach (the devastation from Hurricane Opal was gruesome) with old friends from Montana-time, a night at a grim but serviceable campground, then two days in Ft. Pierce on the Atlantic with Norma, an old camping buddy. We go to church Sunday. The altar at the end of the church is a giant window. When the choir sings, they turn that way. Outside is a great space of sky, and the tops of trees.

Running out of land, the bottom of a continent, is Key West, Florida. Next stop is Cuba, ninety miles away over the Straits of Florida. Key West is three hours' driving time from Miami (a world away in flora and fauna, customs, history, and way of life!).

I suggest to first-time visitors that they ride the Conch Train. (A conch is a shellfish, looks like a snail, and is used in all sorts of ways for food.) If you were

born here, you are called a conch. If you have lived here more than seven years, you are a freshwater conch. The Conch Republic seceded one time from the Union. The Conch Republic is a state of mind! The driver blew through a conch shell. It was loud!

The Conch Train is a small, gaily painted four-car (four seats for four people in each car) train and a black engine, complete with bell and whistle. Through the loudspeaker comes the sound of a train, then the voice of the driver, shorts-clad, with a smart blue jacket, with emblem. "Welcome to Paradise. Smoking no! Eating yes! Keep your body parts inside. Hang onto your things, wind off the water." Toot toot and away we go!

Up Route 1 (starts here in Key West, goes all the way to Ft. Kent in Maine, 1,235 miles). Key West is 380 miles south of Cairo, Egypt. Then we turn down South Roosevelt Boulevard, along the beach (3,000-foot Smathers Beach). Streets are named after noteworthy visitors: Truman Avenue, Kennedy Drive. The water is very shallow. You can walk out 400 feet and the water is still four feet deep. No big waves on this beach. We are protected by a magnificent "living" coral reef that they are trying to keep intact. Band music on the loudspeaker, then the driver's voice again. Sand on the beaches is washed away by hurricanes, replaced with sand from upper Florida. We pass E. Martello Tower, fortress built long ago,

now a gallery, with gala parties taking place on the bricks outside underneath ancient fig trees and scarlet Poincianas. At the airport you can see a blue tower that measures and tracks hurricanes for a radius of 250 miles around Key West. At one time 90% of sponges were produced here. They used glass-bottomed boats, with a three-pronged iron hook on a thirty-to sixty-foot wooden pole. Blight destroyed the sponges. Now it is against the

law to look for them. Greeks named them sponge: half plant, half animal.

The first Conch Train, pulled by mules, was owned by the owner of one of the many cigar factories. (The mule train

picked up the workers.) From 1831 until 1870, Key West was the world's largest cigar manufacturing center...used filler tobacco from Cuba. Strikes, mechanical methods, and the great fire of 1884 brought it to an end.

The average temperature for Key West is 79°. It went down to 41° in 1987—people nearly froze! The island is on a coral limestone base, is fourteen miles long and a mile and a half wide. Ponce de Leon passed through the Keys in 1513. The early people were Indians...many bloody battles...left bones all over. When the Spanish came, they called it Cayo Huesa (Bone Key). Anglicized by sound, it became Key West. English got here in 1763. Cultured settlers from New England and the Southern states, well-to-do Spanish from St. Augustine and Pensacola, and their servants, "Bahama Isles Colored."

Brown pelicans are everywhere, waiting for the fishing boats to come in, swimming nearby when you swim in the sea. Although fat, they nevertheless can swoop out of the water and fly strongly to land on a Mangrove tree, where they sleep. Mangroves grow in the salt water, send roots out. More trees come up, sometime building whole islands. On the top of some power poles that line the 150-mile highway down the islands to Key West, you can see nests. The mother osprey sits on the eggs. The father brings fish he has dived for. You see a conch



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Onto Simonton Street. The Spanish sold the island of Key West to John Simonton for \$2,000 in a Havana bar. He divided the island up, sold to Fleming, to Whitehead. Fleming and Whitehead named the streets for their daughters and sons: Caroline, Margaret, William, Elizabet, and Frances.

Tropical palms bend constantly in the warm tradewinds, and exotic colored flowers bloom in every garden. No chimneys on the houses—not needed. Key West has the biggest collection of old wooden houses built by New Englanders, ship carpenters, and people from the islands. You see widows' walks, tin roofs (fire has always been a threat), gingerbread on the houses (named from the spice industry, so important to the people). Picturesque narrow streets, white fences, hidden gardens and pools. An old, long,

narrow (one-room width) cigar worker's house sells now for a lot of money! The houses were left unpainted (lower taxes).

Many writers have found their way to Key West: Hemingway (lived here ten years), Tennessee Williams, Tom McGuane, poets Elizabeth Bishop, James Merrill, and Richard Wibur. Seven Pulitzer Prize winners have lived in Key West. They find they can write here, living in houses filled with traditions and history, wearing shorts and sneakers, riding bikes, fishing and swimming. There are other writers to talk to, a mixture of people (very rich and very poor). It's a place of eccentricity, with freedom to work and play. People live out their fantasies. So do visitors to Key West!

— Joan Woodard Reed

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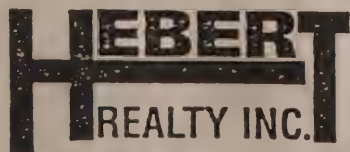
-- Matthew Breuer, a Roadside regular

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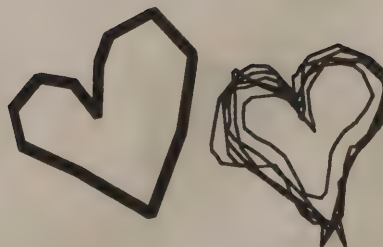
*It was not he or she  
it must have been myth  
their shadows flickering and yearning  
in heroic shapes  
on the walls of existence  
while they warmed their hearts  
at the tiny flame  
of their reality*

*She thought of Rodin later  
as they kissed  
standing near the window  
in the snowlight—  
art came up from life  
and life went back to art—  
stone, vision, beauty  
white in the heart*

*Lovers are priests  
handing each other  
in exultant ritual  
the first sacraments of life*

*And then she whispered:  
Each star is a kiss  
I would give you—  
should others wake  
to a starless night  
you would be lying in my arms  
covered with light.*

*She wakes in the night  
remembering—  
she hears music:  
it is her old body singing*



## THE PUZZLE SOLVED

*Are you the missing part  
Now found  
That locks into my heart  
That frees  
The shrouded thought  
Shut away  
From air and light  
Too long*

*The visions stretch and wake  
Murmuring  
Of constant love that slakes  
The thirst  
That put my soul at risk  
Hollow  
In the self-made desert dark.  
You  
Seal and soothe the cracks  
Flood  
The empty, fragile flask  
Until  
The surging, sensual link  
Unmasks  
The core behind the cloak*

— Nick Hardcastle

(Five separate Valentines from A. O. Howell)



## MORE THAN A DOZEN

*A parade of little ghosts  
Comes footling through my mind.  
How good once more to  
Feel cool noses  
And warm tongues.*

*I know you're there  
Beneath the grass  
With stones to mark your graves  
But I hold you here within my mind  
My ever loving knaves.*

— E. L. Wilson

## IMAGES

On me  
Rain presses damp,  
seductive  
The kiss on my lips,  
provocative  
The hiss  
Of breath on skin,  
restive  
As the wind's  
Wet sinuous brush  
evocative  
Of touch  
Flowing gentle, furious  
responsive  
A mosaic  
Light, love and laughter  
native  
In my sight  
In my heart  
The paragon of bliss  
definitive  
In you

— Lesley Givet

## INDIAN LOVE SONG

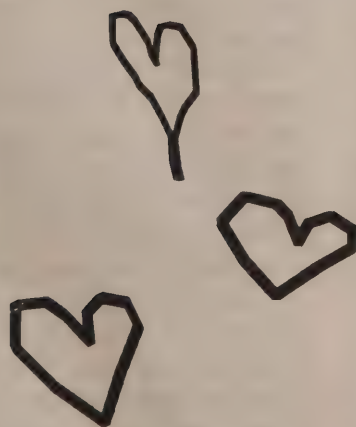
*Creeping Cloud*  
Stumbles loud  
Through the verdant forest  
His lack of poise,  
Excessive noise,  
Means he can only forage

*So bark he brings*  
Nuts and things  
That grow in great profusion  
For of his skill  
To hunt and kill  
He holds no false illusion

*Sweet Twisted Dove*  
His own true love  
Forgives that lack of talent  
For there are ways  
Her brave displays  
His prowess, strong and valiant

*Night draws its cowl*  
The wolves do howl  
As the valley sinks in slumber  
Then *Creeping Cloud*  
So strong and proud  
Sparks *Twisted Dove's* desire  
With tender trace  
And gentle grace  
He becomes her tireless hunter

— Nick Hardcastle





## COVETING THE LITTLE HORSES OF PITTSFIELD

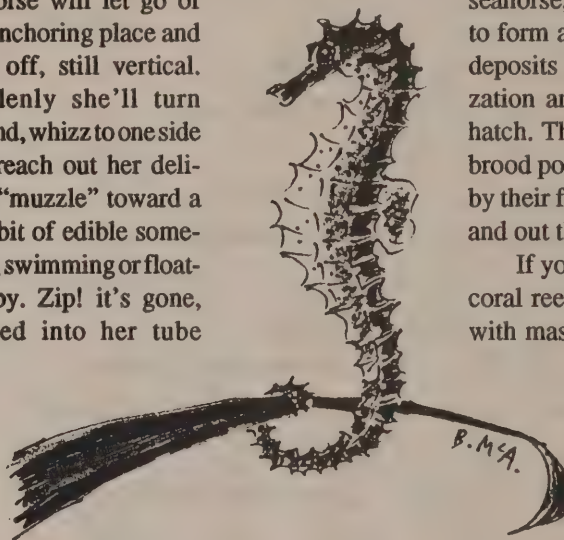
There are some little horses in Pittsfield that won't leave me alone. I saw them two months ago, and ever since I've been half-afraid they were just a dream. I walked into a familiar big stone building, through heavy doors, down marble steps into a room with no sunlight. This is a dark room, but it has rows of colorful, lit windows, each one revealing lives and worlds you might not expect on a freezing day in Pittsfield. I've been there many times over the years, but this was the first time I'd seen the newest window, the one opening onto the world of seahorses.

We all know the seahorse from childhood, from cartoons, from books. I've always thought they looked like my favorite chess piece, the knight. Like him, the seahorses are small and armored. Their movements are unusual, their attitude vertical. Like him, they are not really horses.

Seahorses are fish, members of the same large infraclass as salmon, perch, and eels. They are teleost fish, the "most advanced" of the bony fish, and within this large group they belong to the order Gasterosteiformes which includes families with such marvelous names as stickleback, tube snout, trumpetfish, cornetfish, snipefish, pipefish, and ghost pipefish. All these fish have thick bony rings or plates instead of scales. In the seahorse the plates interlock, and where they join they protrude in ridges or knobs.

I watched the little seahorses in the Berkshire Museum. At first glance they

seem quite sedentary, using their prehensile tails to hang onto the vegetation in their tank. You might even think they were ceramic ornaments, like the castles and mermaids some people like to put in their fish tanks. But if you sit still for a few minutes, you'll start to see motion. A seahorse will let go of her anchoring place and drift off, still vertical. Suddenly she'll turn around, whizz to one side and reach out her delicate "muzzle" toward a tiny bit of edible something swimming or floating by. Zip! it's gone, sucked into her tube



snout. Maybe she doesn't like it—pitui! it's out again.

Seahorses live in the sea, mostly in warm waters. In summer they can be found off Cape Cod, but in winter the water is too cold for them there. The dwarf seahorse, which is about two inches long, is found in the Gulf of Florida where it lives in eelgrass and turtlegrass, hanging on by its tail most of the time but making independent forays now and then. The fins of the seahorse are small and there is no tail fin. Just behind the head, where the ears would be if this were truly a horse, are the pectoral fins. These seem

to twirl as you watch and they do the steering. Propulsion comes from the dorsal fin, which is fan-shaped and delicate. You can see it in the middle of the seahorse's back.

Most fish have pectoral fins, farther back and on the belly side. In the male seahorse, these have been modified to form a brood pouch. The female deposits her eggs there after fertilization and in about ten days they hatch. Then they are born from the brood pouch by being squeezed out by their father. He contorts his body and out they come, one by one.

If you spend time snorkeling in coral reef communities, or drifting with masses of floating Sargassum

weed, you might see a seahorse in the wild.

If you are like me, your best bet for seeing a seahorse is to go to the Berkshire Museum. Then, if you are

like me, you will want one of your own, or maybe several. What makes a person want a seahorse? In my case, since I do not often "want fish" in this mindless covetous way, I think the answer lies in the horseyness of the creature. All my life I have wanted horses, and seahorses do look like horses, the way they tuck their heads. (In fact, people are always trying to get horses to tuck their heads even more this way than they really want to, so appealing is it to our sense of equine aesthetics.)

Maybe I'll ride out to a pet store and wrangle myself a few little horses some day. Today I've had to content myself with the big variety, of which we have two plus a pony. I have moved mountains of snow several times today getting out to the horses, fed them extra hay and corn to cheer them through a big snowstorm. All the time I'm dreaming of a bubbling window in Pittsfield, of four-inch horses with twirling ears. I could drop in a pinch of teeny crustaceans and watch my horses levitate toward them like little helicopters or hummingbirds. It's another world, and the amazing thing is we can go there, even in a Berkshire winter.

— Bonner J. McAllester

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## WILDLIFE SURVEY

**More Winter.** We won't know until later if the "Blizzard of 1996" was the peak or merely the premonition. In any case, our present deep snow has tested the survival ability of our wildlife, as well as human, population.

**From the Roads.** What one can see over the high banks of snow gives the impression of a closed wildlife shop. Crows and ravens, their inky black in sharp contrast to the white world, a bevy of chickadees, an occasional hawk, these are all that seem to be moving. But on January 14 and 18 raccoons were seen by the road at night, the first on Route 23 at the Stevens Lake road and the second on the Monument Mountain road. Dale Duryea says a favorite temporary winter refuge for raccoons is in culverts, especially for young ones that have been encouraged to leave the family den and find new homes. A skunk was killed on Monument Mountain Road Thursday night, January 18. This warm spell had brought it out of hibernation.

A common sight these days is freshly disturbed snow where a deer has left the woods and plunged down the steep bank into the road. When the banks become dingy, these tracks catch the eye by the clean white snow they expose. At first glance, it looks quite a bit as though a person had floundered down the bank, but a closer look shows the print of sharp

hooves at the bottom of the deep holes.

**More About Deer.** The Fish and Wildlife people continue to advise against feeding the wildlife even though we worry about their scarce food supply. They say, for example, that deer develop special enzymes at this time of year for digesting winter twigs, bark and buds, and that hay and grain are not nourishing to them in winter. Dale says they haven't touched the round bales of hay in his meadow.

In the Adirondacks, wildlife observers are finding dead fawns that lost out in the competition for browsing. The taller deer can reach higher twigs when the low ones are gone.

**Turkeys.** The wild turkeys are finding ways to eat in spite of the deep snow. A number have been seen in pastures helping the horses eat their grain. Turkeys at the bird feeder were reported last month, and a number have been seen this month doing the same thing.

On Wednesday afternoon, January 17, near Monument Mountain, Bonner McAllester saw an enterprising turkey in a tree eating bittersweet berries from a vine that had climbed up there. There were three or four more turkeys on the ground.

**Tamaracks.** Tamarack (Algonquin name many people use for larch) twigs put forth their green needles as reliably as forsythia does its yellow bells, if you bring them in the house and give them water this time of year. David McAllester brought some in just for their attractive knobbly look and was surprised to make this discovery. The little tufts of bright green needles are a treat to see. Tamarack is our only conifer that drops all its needles every fall, and it is one of the first trees to turn green in the spring.

## UPON MY WORD!

Etymology, or the study of word origins, is a delight open to anyone. A word comes to you tumbling down through centuries of having been spoken and written by countless mouths and hands, and offers you in every case its own special story. I was stopped in my tracks at Price Chopper in the baking section by some five-pound bags of sugar.

Mmm, I think, sez I, that word, if I remember right, comes from Persian, though it's cognate with the German Zucker, French sucre, Italian zucchero, and related to saccharin. But Europeans made sugar from beetroots, not sugar cane.

So when we came home, I did some research. I found out that sugar cane originated in China and is first mentioned in a manu-

script dated 305 A.D. Like handmade paper, it came to the attention of the Arabs and Persians. So the word does come from Persian, but its history goes back to the Sanskrit root *çakara*, meaning gravel. That root also went into the Latin calculus, pebble. People used to calculate with pebbles—but that's another story. I always thought sugar cane came from the Caribbean islands, and so it does today. But, oddly enough, it didn't originate there. Christopher Columbus brought sugar cane to Hispaniola on his second voyage to the New World, thereby starting an enormous industry. And don't forget that includes rum.

Walter, my dear husband, is also a man of words and wit. Next trip to market he paused wistfully in front of some salami. "Salaam in Arabic and shalom in Hebrew mean peace, but where does salami come from?" After a sigh, he turned to me and grinned. "It must mean a peace of sausage!"

Which goes to show the delights of etymology.

— David P. McAllester

— A. O. Howell



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## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF HANNAH CLIMENA PIXLEY CONTINUED

*We pick up the story in the period when as a child Hannah Climena first went to live with Mary Jane Pixley, around the time Mary Jane married Orlin Gleason, whom Hannah calls "Mr. G." There is a genealogical chart with text following.*

When I was four years old I was reading words of four letters then Mother came. The first I ever remember of seeing her she came with a man and took me to town to get me a pair of shoes. When we got back, she told me he was my new Papa. I did not like his looks, but thought I must love him, so I climbed up on the back of his chair and kissed him, but he knocked me down and told me, "If I ever done that again he would kill me." I went to bed and they were gone the next morning and I was left with Grandmother. So the next day Grandmother told me I must go to school. Mother had gone off with her new man. So I put on my new shoes and started for school. When I got to the nearest neighbors, my shoes hurt me so I could not go. I went in and began to cry. They were a kind-hearted old couple and the old man said, "That child would not cry like that unless she is hurt." I told him my feet hurt, then he looked at my feet. They were so swollen he had to cut off my shoes. Then the lady done up my feet in cotton batting and he took me home on his shoulder and told Grandmother never

to put them shoes on me again. So then I went barefoot. I must of looked like a little savage, but there was a lady across the road who was dying with dropsy and she used to call me in and comb my hair for school. God bless her.

Finally, Mother come and took me to live with her and her husband. He was a brute and a fiend in human form.

I must never ask for anything to eat at the table or look up from my plate. Once I did look up and he threw a carving knife at my head. It cut off a lock of my hair and stuck up in the floor, just back of my chair. It came near hitting his old big white cat that set there. My, if he had ever hit that, he would have killed me.

He made me watch and take care of thirty geese. I used to have to run up and down the brook to keep them from running away in the Spring and Fall. Then in the Fall I must shell the corn for his hogs. My hands was all blistered and skinned. My fingers are all crooked today from that work. Then one time he had some hay that was full of poison ivy and he knew that it would poison me dreadful.

So he told Mother, "I must have that load of hay." She told him I was not big enough. She would load it for him. Then just as soon as he got a lot of the poison ivy on, he took me and throwed me face downward right into it. All over then, I was poisoned dreadful and he would not let her take any care of it. No one can know what I suffered then. At night I had to go up in a garet-like chamber to sleep on a pile of rags on the floor in the dark, and great rats run over me all night. I did not dare cry or make a sound. If I had, he would of killed me, so I used to lay and whisper my little prayer and talk to God and ask him to take care of me. For there was no one to care for me. No one to love me. No one to care—I was just a little nobody from county no where. After a while, Mother, as I shall call her, was going to have a child and her husband was gone every night. I since learned that he was a road agent to rob people. Mother had Grampa and Grandmother go to live with her. Then six weeks before her child was born, her father fell and broke his hip. Then her husband went and roped

and tied poor old Grampa right down to the bed so he could not be turned at all until the doctor come and cut the ropes that bound him down. The doctor told my supposed to be step-dad never to let him find them ropes on that old man again, but I knew that doctor never came there without a loaded pistol in his pocket for he knew Mr. G., as I will call him hereafter. This is no fiction, but our true names I had rather leave out as I am well known here in South Berkshire and have always lived here and visited a great many people who came to see me. Yet they never knew what my life has been and never will unless they read the true story of my life, just as I write it now.

To resume my story, Grandfather lived six weeks and died. Grandmother lived on with Mother, then my brother, as he is called, was born. At that time, I was six years old. I remember being sent to a neighbor's to stay until I was sent for. At that time, them neighbors, I will call Mr. H. and his wife, they lived in Sheffield. They both loved children, but never had any of their own. What a happy time I spent there for about a week. They had a pack of cards, but no play things, so when Mr. H. came in from work after supper, he would tell me the pictures on them and show me how to play little games with them until time for me to go to bed. My bed was a nice one and the bedroom opened off the living room right where Mrs. H. would work in the evening. But she thought I would be afraid to get to bed at night so she always had Mr. H. lay on the bed with me until I got to sleep at night. They was very kind to me and wanted to adopt me as their own, but Mr. G. would not let me go to live with them. So after a couple of weeks, they took me home. How I did dread to go home, but Mrs. H. made it as pleasant for me as she could. She told me I had a baby brother to play with and they give me the cards to keep that Mr. H. and I had played with. Mrs. H. also bought me a little doll and dress about six inches tall and a little work basket with a spool of red thread in it. I learned after, that doll and basket cost one dollar. Now they could be got for ten cents. How Mr. and Mrs. H. did



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## This is to Certify

That Mr. Newton Thompson of Colebrook in the State of  
Connecticut and Miss Mary Jane Pixley of Monterey  
in the State of Massachusetts were By me Joined together in

## HOLY MATRIMONY

on the Twenty Second day of January in the Year of our Lord  
One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty Two

(In Presence of)

John B. Pixley

Rachael M. Brewer & others

Jeremiah Hoar  
Minister of the Gospel.  
In the Methodist Episcopal Church

Dated at Monterey County of Massachusetts on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of the Month of \_\_\_\_\_

The marriage certificate of Mary Jane Pixley and Newton Thompson of Colebrook, the first of her three husbands.

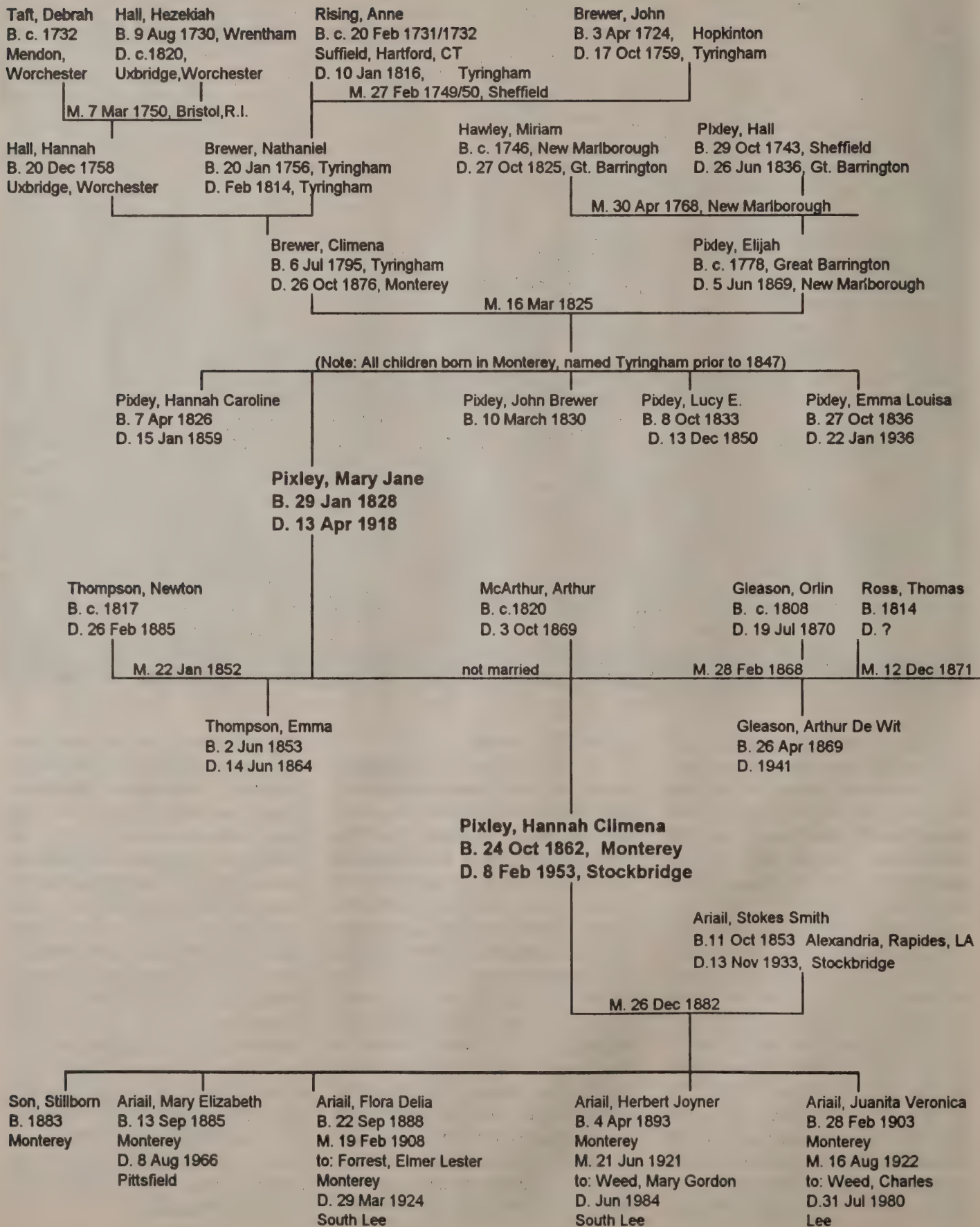
cry when they had to take me home, and I did too, for I knew the dreadful home I had. But I did not know the horror that was yet to come, for if I had I think I would of laid down in the brook and drowned my little self. But I did not know, so time passed on. Sometimes in the day time when Mr. G. would not be asleep, he would get the cards and want me to play games with him until one day a man came to clean house for Mother. He knew Mr. G. well and I will call him Mr. Darby. He found the cards and asked Mother about them. She told him Mr. G. and I played with them. He asked her if she knew the danger it placed me in. He told her if I did not happen to play just to suit him, he would murder me and bury me there somewhere. So he burnt up the cards, so that was the end of my having them. And I think it was all for the best

that he did burn them.

We lived about a half a mile off in the lots off from the road and away from all the neighbors. There was a line fence near the house that divided Mr. G.'s place from a big pasture where we had to go through to get on to the main road. The line fence was a high rail fence with a big gate to drive through to get onto the road, as that was a pasture at that time and was full of cattle among them. There was one big bull that was ugly. Sometimes they would be right up by the fence where I had to go through the lot to go to school. Mother used to want to take the baby and stand by the window to watch me go through the herd of cattle to see if I got killed by that big bull. But Mr. G. would not allow her to look out of the window to watch me if he was awake when I started for school. I used to be so lone-

some and I was so small from being half fed. Finally, there was two little boys, one seven, the other six. I will call them Jimmie and Willie. They used to come down in the lot to meet me to go to school. They had no sister, so they called me sister, and said they come in the lot to take care of me. It is a wonder we was not all killed. God must of watched over us and kept us from harm. I remember one night we were coming home from school through the woods and there was a dreadful thunder shower. The little boys had me stand up against a big pine tree. They took off their little coats and put them around me while one stood on each side of me to shelter me from the storm. Oh, how it did thunder and lightening that night. Those same little boys lived to be old men. I met them in after years when I was seventy years old.







## THE PIXLEY FAMILY TREE

Flora Brantley, granddaughter of Flora Delia Ariail, the third of five children born to Hannah Climena Pixley Ariail, generously provided the *Monterey News* with nineteen pages of the family genealogy. The pedigree charts she has worked on for many years trace the family back to the colonial period. We focus here on the branches of the tree directly relating to Hannah Climena Pixley Ariail and her children.

In our chart the mother of each offspring appears on the left of the parental pairing (with the exception of Mary Jane Pixley, putative mother of Hannah Climena). We have generally excluded siblings, except those important in the autobiography. Where available, marriage data has been included on the marital pairing line.

From the very beginning of her autobiography, Hannah Climena maintains there was an untold secret surrounding her birth and parentage, a mystery that remains unsolved in the story she set down. She calls Mary Jane Pixley her "supposed-to-be mother," and wonders why a well on her grandfather's farm that was a good source of water, difficult and expensive to dig, was covered over about the time of her birth. This well was the sole source of water on the farm, and stoning it up necessitated subsequent purchase of a water right, ditching and laying pipe for a quarter mile, and building "a water house with a great deep watering trough running through it out to the highway to water thirsty horses." The reader cannot help but wonder what, or who, was thrown down the well. Why, asks Hannah Climena, was she raised by Mary Jane's parents for the first six years of her life? Definitive answers to these questions are not found in materials that have come to light so far. But we know more than the autobiography tells us.

Mary Jane Pixley was the second oldest of five children born to Climena Brewer and Elijah Pixley. All five of the children were born in Monterey (called Tyringham at the time). It is known that Mary Jane was married three times and bore three children. She was married first in 1852, to Newton Thompson. Her first

daughter by this first marriage, Emma Thompson, died at the age of eleven in 1864. Whether or not Mary Jane was formally divorced from Newton Thompson, the marriage must have fallen apart, for Mary Jane married her second husband, Orlin Gleason, in 1868. Their only child was Arthur De Wit Gleason, born in 1869.

Hannah Climena, second child of Mary Jane Pixley, was born in 1862, two years before the death of Emma Thompson and six years before Mary Jane's marriage to Orlin Gleason.

Hannah said, "It always seemed strange to me that my own mother should cast a side her own child to nurse and love another not her own. By the way, the girl she did nurse is dead."

This may be Emma Thompson, but she is not mentioned by name anywhere in the autobiography.

Orlin Gleason died in 1870, and Mary Jane married Thomas Ross in 1871. They did not have any children.

Orlin Gleason's last will and testament was dictated (he was evidently illiterate, as the document is signed with an "x" designated as "his mark") on July 16, 1869, a year before his death and only months after the birth of his only son. In the will, Gleason leaves all his property first to his wife Mary Jane, then to their son Arthur, and, finally, if he is deceased, Gleason provides that "all my estate shall go to Hannah C. McArthur daughter of my wife before our marriage." When Flora Brantley searched Berkshire County genealogical records of the period, she found only one McArthur, a man whose first name was Arthur, and who lived in Sheffield. (It also seems noteworthy that Orlin Gleason and Mary Jane Pixley's only son was named Arthur.) The will establishes that Mary Jane was Hannah's mother, and suggests that Arthur McArthur was her father. She was evidently born out of wedlock, as Mary Jane Pixley and Arthur McArthur were never married.

We may speculate from this evidence that Hannah Climena was born during a turbulent period in Mary Jane's

life when her first-born daughter by her first marriage (which ended in estrangement) was mortally ill at a young age. Possibly Mary Jane was overwhelmed by her bad luck and trouble, and left her infant daughter Hannah to be raised in her parents' household, making the best of a bad situation. Perhaps things fell better into place around the time of her marriage to Orlin Gleason, and her surviving daughter came to live with her for the first time. But as Hannah Climena's

story unfolds, we will see that the trouble did not end, and events took a heavy emotional toll on Mary Jane Pixley.

We may know more of her birth than Hannah Climena did herself. Perhaps she never saw Orlin Gleason's last will and testament, or her name

written down with the surname McArthur. Family members say she remained close to her half-brother Arthur Gleason throughout her life, but perhaps he was unaware of the McArthur connection, or kept silence. He died by his own hand in 1941.

In the opening lines of her life story, Hannah Climena comments that "as I write this, the last one has gone down to the grave with one secret untold, that could I think of ["have"?] told everything." It appears from the genealogy that she is referring to Mary Jane's eldest sister Emma Louisa Pixley, who died in 1936, when Hannah Climena was 74, and started dictating her story. Emma Louisa would have been the last surviving member of the immediate family, aside from Arthur Gleason.

— Ian Jenkins and Peter Murkett



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## Regarding Hunger Mountain

January 20, 1996

To the Editor:

The preservation of wildlife habitat is not the only concern raised by continued development in Monterey. The preservation of a human habitat becomes an issue as well. Like their fellow creatures, human beings will abandon an area that no longer serves the needs that brought them there.

The rapid growth of urbanization toward the end of the last century led to increasing numbers of people seeking retreats in the countryside where they could renew contact with the natural environment. Some of these people came to Monterey attracted by the beauty of the landscape, the charm of the native culture, and, let it be especially noted, the low density of population. It was precisely the lack of development that attracted the second home owners who now make up the majority of property owners in the town.

But these second home owners, the people who a century ago began establishing their "camps" in the woods, are not the only ones who have valued Monterey's rustic atmosphere. Numbers of year-round dwellers have come to Monterey for the same reasons. They too value the large tracts of relatively unspoiled forest and open space. And they value the peculiar grace that attends human relations freed of the pressures of over-population.

Now these values are in jeopardy. The Monterey environment has changed radically, especially over the last thirty years as forested areas have been broken up for homesites, and as various public improvements have lent the town an almost suburban ambience. No doubt we should rejoice that more and more people have come to enjoy the special qualities of Monterey. But there comes a point in the degree of human settlement beyond which those qualities begin to disappear. For some of us that point has been passed. There are people whose loyalty to their homesteads and to the community is such that they would not leave even if sky-

scrapers went up all around them. But if they were looking for a wilderness retreat today, many of these people probably would seek out a place less developed than Monterey has become.

Excessive development alters the human habitat. In the end it alters the character of the human population. Values long cherished cease to be treasured and cultivated. Even property values may go down, thus cancelling any short-term economic benefits new development may bring. Let us seek to preserve the peculiar human habitat of Monterey.

— Roy Shepard  
Montclair, N. J., and Elephant Rock Road

January, 1996

To the Editor:

This is a reaction to the page one story in the December, 1995, issue of the *Monterey News* pertaining to the pending proposal of a developer to purchase the 300-acre parcel on Tyringham and Mt. Hunger Roads from Ms. McLendon's heirs for the purpose of creating a seventeen-lot development thereon. That proposal includes a common septic system to be shared, to be constructed on two acres of land bordering Tyringham Road. Such a proposal had to be part of the developer's plans, since most of Ms. McLendon's land would not "perc."

We have informed the Select Board of our distress, if not dismay, with the possibility that that land might lead to the development of the property as described. We've shared those thoughts with some of our immediate neighbors. We've been asked by some of them to share such thoughts with other Monterey residents whose homes may not abut the McLendon property, because the action contemplated above affects all of us in Monterey.

Our distress has roots in part of the recent history affecting Mt. Hunger—our town's only, beautiful mountain. Not too many years ago, Mt. Hunger Road—then a rural wide path used by campers, hikers, strollers, and sightseers—was widened, from Tyringham Road to the top of the mountain. When we asked why, we were informed that Ms. McLendon's children would then be able

to plan houses on her property at the top of the mountain (two homes), and that the widened road would provide appropriate access. For most of that summer, almost every hour of the day during each week, truckloads of cut trees (we stopped counting after hundreds of them) passed our house at the bottom of Mt. Hunger Road. Our town's mountain lost many hundreds of old and young trees; the environment was drastically changed; and now a new purpose, if approved, would change Mt. Hunger's environment even more drastically. We share the following:

1. That land, similar to other land on both sides of Mt. Hunger Road, and other land in the vicinity, contains numerous trees, wetlands, deer paths, ponds, brooks: the kind of area that any of us would label "rural, rustic, forested or pastoral land." A brook crosses under Tyringham Road, just at the edge of that property and flows from there, then under Mt. Hunger Road, across properties on its way to Lake Garfield. We have seen beavers, squirrels, deer, frogs, raccoons and other animals in the ponds and on animal paths through the area. It is a scene that we and other Monterey residents should relish—far from "developments" and shared septic systems. What will happen to the environment we now know—to the land and its animal inhabitants? They, like us, will wonder: shall or can we stay? Is our environment no longer why we came to Monterey? Will one developer on available acreage mean others as land is sold—"suburbanizing" the present wooded and former farm lands?

2. We can't contemplate how many trees would be cleared from that land—very drastically changing that forest environment; how many animal paths, ponds, wetland areas will change. Our family came to Monterey twenty-eight years ago; we bought an old farmhouse (it is reported as the oldest house in Monterey, built around a central fireplace sometime between 1739 and 1741) on a parcel of land formerly known as the Old Garfield Farm on Mt. Hunger Road. Our brother and sister-in-law bought the Old Morse Farm on the other side of Mt. Hunger Road; it borders the McLendon property on both Tyringham and Mt.



Neither area is farmed now, but we have tried to retain the rural, pastoral quality that brought us to Monterey. We've made our living quarters somewhat more convenient, and we've planted new flower beds in front of our house along Mt. Hunger Road; but the land, trees, brooks, ponds, wetlands and animal paths are undisturbed, except as branches fall, paths overgrow, etc. We believe the birds, deer, frogs, and other animals—even the mayflies—would not want their habitats changed further by any nearby developments; neither do we. We've managed to share the wonders of Mt. Hunger's natural environment these many years. We'd like, for all our sakes, to continue to do so.

3. If "developments" become our neighbors the nature of the area will change—such is the legacy of "progress," as we all know. And lurking behind the contemplated sale of any acreage for development purposes is the thought that doesn't vanish—why wouldn't others with similar properties—smaller or larger—think similarly? Can other developments not be too far behind, especially if land that doesn't percolate can be considered for large, shared septic systems, which, like the contemplated development, will provide a single septic system on two acres of the property for the seventeen lots of the development!

4. If a development is to grow on the town's only mountainside, something in our town will have gone—never to return. That should be something for us and our heirs to contemplate. How nice it would be to contemplate the alternative that such forested, rural land on the town's only mountain be part of a preserve—held for the pleasure of all those who now live in Monterey, and for those who will be, or come here, after we've gone. A mountain, trees, wetlands, ponds, brooks and the rural atmosphere that now obtains has been the past; if we're lucky it could be part of the future, too, if there is the will and means to make it so! Whatever the decision, we shall have to live with it from now on.

— Arthur and Elsa Bronstein  
Mt. Hunger Road

In December, the winter got off to a fine start. There was 27" more snow on the ground for Christmas than we had a year ago, and temperatures were cold, not bitter. It felt like a classic New England winter, with fool-proof cross-country ski conditions. Then on January 8 a blizzard raked the whole northeast coast, and Great Barrington got the deepest snowfall in Massachusetts—three feet. Everyone was shoveling roofs. There was so much snow that footprints went down out of sight, with a clean, watery blue color at the edges. A *Daily News* from the San Fernando Valley in California carried a picture of Ernie Heath digging out "his wife's car" in Monterey on page one of its January 10 edition.

Then the marvelous winter of '96 collapsed in warm temperatures and wind-driven rain. Rivers and basements flooded, roads washed out, and the snow became fog: breezes carried it off as visibly as if the banks were powder blowing away. In three days we were reduced to a grungy covering of icy old snow.

A headline in the Sunday, January 14, edition of *The New York Times* read "Blame Global Warming for the Blizzard." The text only hedged a little on this declaration; William K. Stevens wrote, "For all the tantalizing signs and signals, it remains uncertain as to whether human activity is changing the climate a little or a lot, and if a lot, how drastic the change will ultimately be." But how does a warming trend cause a blizzard? A "warming atmosphere causes more evaporation of water from the ocean, which means more rain, snow or sleet. The conversion of more water from vapor to precipitation also releases more energy into the atmosphere, making storms more powerful." Meteorologist Thomas R. Karl of the National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, N. C., said, "We seem to be getting these storms of the century every couple of years."

Indeed, wrote Mr. Stevens, "extreme weather will be a hallmark of the changing climate, and in fact may be the most common way in which people experience global warming." In Monterey

within the year we have experienced inundation, flood, drought, wind, and deep snow. Every day we drive through new, tornado-made vistas, past a memorial chapel for three killed, and we swing up the hill at Butternut, looking down past our skis at hundreds of trees blown over in a few dramatic seconds late last spring.

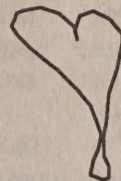
Have we brought this on ourselves? Causes of global warming (about one degree Fahrenheit in the last century) likely include the greenhouse gases produced by burning coal, oil, and wood. Scientists, the high priests of our era, do not all agree on the significance of data, but there is increasing consensus among them that, to some degree,

human activity is responsible for the warming trend, and thus for recent extremes of weather.

What more fitting phenomenon to mark the millennium? Atmospheric calamities visit all creatures alike, at random, like the wrath of God. If we cannot grasp our effect on something at once so vast and delicate as the atmosphere, we cannot help but feel its effect on us—by quick turns annoying, pleasant, catastrophic. If we manage to take concerted, effective, remedial action, it will be a miracle equal to the occasion. More likely we will just fire up the snowblower and go to work by habit in our own dooryards. People talk a lot about the weather; what to do is another matter.

Here are December statistics.

High temp (12/2) .....	41°
Low temp. (12/13) .....	-1°
Wind-chilled low temp. (12/20) .....	-35°
Avg. high temp. ....	29°
Avg. low temp. ....	16°
Avg. temp. ....	22.5°
Monthly norm. (Pitts.) .....	25.3°
Precip. occ. ....	17 days
Rainfall .....	.53"
Snowfall .....	.29"
Total precip. ....	3.38"
Monthly norm. (Pitts.) .....	3.70"
High bar. press. (12/13) .....	30.38"
Low bar. press. (12/26) .....	29.45"
High humidity (12/22) .....	90%
Low humidity (12/5) .....	63%
Avg. wind speed .....	3.2 mph
High wind gust (12/26) .....	37 mph





## AQUARIAN MUSINGS, PART II

Aquarius. Consider it symbolic of Archimedes shouting "Eureka!—I understand!" The lightning bolt of awareness was so sudden and profound that it drove him from the bath tub straight into the streets. That's a typical Aquarian moment: a playground for the madman, the genius, the clown, or the saint, but a whirlwind of confusion for conservative, or even conventional, expectations. It's the monkey wrench in the schedule, the unexpected event that reminds us that while we may be asked to steward this planet, we don't actually control it.

A little after seven in the morning on Monday, this past January 8, Mars moved into Aquarius. This zodiac sign is also called "the water carrier." Its symbol is a human figure on one knee, pouring liquid freely out of a container. Mars is the planet whose placement indicates a natural way of doing things, physically. With Mars approaching and then just into Aquarius, we all dealt with a sky full of water, scooped up over the Atlantic and carried to us through the air as "Ginger, the Blizzard of '96."

Coincidence? Divine order? Nonsense? Whatever it's called, there it was again, that wry amusement factor that creeps perpetually into life and living. Maybe it's here to remind us that as long as we keep an attitude of wonder, life will startle us with serendipity, or even revelation.

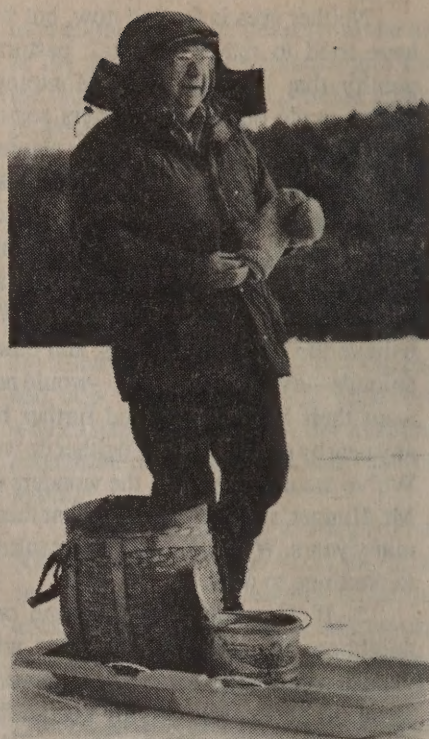
Sometimes revelation arrives at a gallop; sometimes by a more methodical process. I'm familiar with the gallop, but both ways of working are Aquarian, and after these few weeks of mulling over Aquarius and its attendant baggage, I'm shifting my attitude about the opportunities the second process can provide.

Of the air signs, only Aquarius is described as "fixed." With almost half of my astrological points in air signs (stimulating ideas) and not a one of 'em in Aquarius (bringing things to completion) I've had a lot to learn!

My previous image for this aspect of Aquarius was of a sailing vessel becalmed by unmoving air. There in the doldrums, the captain and crew were about to go mad from boredom, starve to death, or, most likely, both. Well, those are possibilities in the doldrums, and I used to run in horror from the entire prospect. As a result, actually getting to the end of a project was not my strong suit. Now I can better celebrate the fixedness which provides time, place, and motivation to finish what I've started. Like this column.

Aquarius. At its best it symbolizes the ability to say yes when the answer is yes, and no when the answer is no. The dilemma? Discerning between revelation and obsession; both of these are Aquarian, too. But a dollop of humor should do it. And Aquarius is sure to provide it.

— MaryKate Jordan



MAGGIE LEONARD

*George Schneider of Glendale, ice fishing on Lake Garfield, caught the pickerel in the photo on page seven.*

## PERSONAL NOTES

Hats off to Rachel Rodgers, a sophomore at Wheaton College, who spent two weeks during January break on the Grand Turk Island, British West Indies, participating in an archaeological expedition called "Before Columbus." The group was looking for signs of an Indian tribe and their culture that existed before Columbus arrived. Our congratulations to Rachel also on her acceptance to the Maritime Studies Program at Williams College and Mystic Seaport for the spring semester. Rachel will travel to Oregon and to the Florida Keys for two weeks of open ocean sailing, and will later sail from Mystic to South Street Seaport in New York City. How exciting it all sounds—good for you, Rachel!

Three cheers for Monterey wrestlers Joe Kopetchny (130) and Jason Tanner (171), who were individual champions in a pair of recent tournaments. Their wins helped to bring home the gold for their team, the Mt. Everett Eagles, who won the overall title in both the Hudson, New York, Tournament and the Pioneer



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Invitational in Northfield. Great job!

Hats off to bowler **Jason Duryea**, who was the high scorer for both single game (95) and series (186) in the Bumpers category at the Cove Bowling Lanes in Great Barrington. At only four years old, Jason is the youngest bowler at the Cove, but a two-year veteran! His team, "Hi-5," which also includes older brother Ray, is also in first place in the standings. Way to go! Jason and Ray are the sons of Dale and Anna Duryea, Main Road.

Very happy birthday wishes this month to **Gige O'Connell** on February 1, to **Mark Makuc** on February 2, to **John Mulroy** on February 6, to **Mike Mielke, Jr.**, on February 7, to **Tim Burke** on February 9, to **Jack Jefferson** and **Lanny Lanoue** on February 14, to **Dave Gauthier** on February 15, to **Maryellen Brown** on February 16, to **Kimberly Gero** on February 18, to **Marta Meluleni** on February 19, to **Rachel Rodgers** on February 20, to **Maggie Clawson** and **Rae-Anne Ziegler** on February 22, to **Jim Edelman** on February 23, to **Ed Dunlop** on February 25, to **Mark Amstead** and **Shelley Bynack** on February 26, to **Paul Makuc**, **Morgan Schick** and **Kayla Snyder** on February 27, and to **Leap Year's Shean O'Connor** on February 29!

Also, happy anniversary wishes to **Jim and Betty Connery** on February 5, to **Gerry and Marge McMahon** on Ol' Cape Cod on February 7, to **Arnold and Judy Hayes** on February 13, and to **Don and Pat Amstead** on February 27.

News or birthday greetings to share? Your contributions are welcome! Give me a call at 528-4519, or jot items down and mail them to me, just Route 23. Thanks in advance!

— Stephanie Grotz

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## **MONTEREY GRANGE**

The Monterey Grange No. 291 met on January 17, when the theme of the program was *A New Beginning*. The flower of the month is the carnation. Berkshire South Pomona No. 25 is scheduled to meet at Stockbridge on January 24, and the Monterey Grange has been invited to the eighty-fifth anniversary of Stockbridge Grange No. 295 on January 26.

The next meeting will be held February 21, for "Love's Old Sweet Song," with red and white refreshments.

— Fraternally,  
Mary Wallace, Lecturer

## **CALENDAR**

**Saturday, February 3** Film series, *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pitman* (1974), 7:30 p.m. in Monterey Library basement. Refreshments. Information, 528-3795.

**Sundays, February 4, 11, 18, and 25** AA meetings, 9 a.m. in the Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

**Saturday, February 10**

Public Hearing on assignment of Town's option to MPLT for purchase of property on Mt. Hunger Road, 9 a.m. in the firehouse.

Film series, *Guess Who's Coming To Dinner* (1967) with Spencer Tracy, Katharine Hepburn, and Sidney Poitier, 7:30 p.m. in Monterey Library basement. Refreshments. Information, 528-3795.

**Saturday, February 17** First Annual Skating Celebration at the rink behind the firehouse, noon-5 p.m. Relay races, figure skating, etc. Food and drinks served all day.

**Tuesday, February 20** Free blood pressure clinic, 9-10:30 a.m. in the basement room of the Monterey Grange (town offices), Main Road.

**Wednesday, February 21**

Winterfest at Gould Farm. Skating, hiking, tea at 4 p.m.

Meeting of the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste District, 7 p.m. in the church basement.

Meeting of the Monterey Grange No. 291, 8 p.m. at the Grange Hall.

**Saturday, February 24** Square and contradance at the Sheffield Grange, Route 7, Sheffield, 8:30-11:30 p.m. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Joe Baker. All dances taught, beginners and children welcome. Refreshments. Adults \$5, children \$2. Information: 413-528-9385 or 518-329-7578.

**Saturday, March 16** Rabies clinic for dogs and cats, 1:30-2:30 p.m. in the firehouse. Fee, \$9 per animal.

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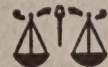


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We invite readers to submit letters, news items, opinions, stories, poetry, drawings, and photographs. Please send submissions by the fifteenth of the month before publication, addressed to the attention of the Editor.

Send any change of address, or initial request to receive the *News* by mail to Susan LePrevost, Business Manager.

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*Contributions from local artists this month: Sudi Baker, p 5; Maureen Banner, pp. 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 21; Erika Crofut, pp. 15, 19; Bonner McAllester, p. 14.*

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